DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

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DECENTRALISATION IN EAST GERMAN INDUSTRY

Eight Ministries Abolished: More Low-Level Initiative

Sweeping decentralisation measures in the German Democratic Republic were unanimously approved by the People's Chamber, the East German Parliament, in a two-day session on February 10th and 11th.

The main effect of the new measures is to abolish detailed governmental control of all stages of industry and agriculture, and to place more responsibility in the hands of the nationalised factories, which are being re-grouped in "Associations of Nationally-Owned Enterprises". In the course of the reorganisation, which will begin immediately, eight ministries will be abolished. The ministries abolished are: Mining, Chemical Industry, Coal and Power, Heavy Engineering, General Engineering, Light Industry, Food Industry and Labour.

In future the State Planning Commission will plan and supervise the broad outlines of industrial and agricultural production, while the plans will be put into effect by the Associations of Nationally-Owned Enterprises, the individual factories, and the local authorities, who have recently been granted broader powers.

The preamble to the act passed by the People's Chamber, which bears the title "Law on the Perfection and Simplification of the Work of the State Apparatus in the German Democratic Republic" states:

"Advancing socialist changes in society present the organs of workers' and peasants' power with increasingly high-level tasks, and demands steady development and perfection of the state apparatus.

"Growing demands necessitate a high level of consciousness, the formation of socialist methods of leadership, and the political-ideological education of the people by the state.

"The organs of the workers' and peasants' state have the great task of fighting to overthrow the old bourgeois-capitalist relations and to develop new socialist relations amongst the people, under the leadership of the Party of the working class and the social organisations."

The law stated that the reorganisation was based upon the following principles:

1. The principle of democratic centralism applies to all activities of the government apparatus, in particular the planning and direction of the economy. The planning of the various branches of the economy must be organised on a complex and territorial basis.

2. All workers are to be ensured conscious and creative participation in production and the direction of the economy. There must be close cooperation with the trade unions.

3. The central state organs must concentrate their activities on the decision of basic problems.

4. The operational direction of industry, building and agriculture must be transferred "nearer to the basis". The operational independence of the factories, in the framework of the state plan, is to be increased.

NAZIS PROMOTED IN DIPLOMAT SHUFFLE

Prominent nazi diplomats have been promoted to more responsible positions in the course of a re-shuffle in the West German Foreign Ministry at the beginning of February.

Here are short biographical notes on some of the diplomats affected:

Dr Otto Braeutigam. New West German consul in Hongkong. During the war was a high official of the nazi "Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territories" Documentary evidence is available of his participation in the liquidation of Jews in Latvia and Rumania, part of which was produced in evidence at the Nuremberg trials. Braeutigam was chief of the Eastern European Department of the West German Foreign Office until 1956, when he was suspended for investigation of his wartime activities. He was recently re-habilitated.

Herbert Dittmann. New Deputy State Secretary in Bonn Foreign Office. Joined nazi party in 1937, and served in nazi diplomatic service in Moscow, Jerusalem, Teheran and Turkey. He entered the West German diplomatic service after the war, but in 1952 a Parliamentary Commission recommended that he be removed: "because of the assistance he has given to a group of National Socialists infiltrating the Foreign Ministry". He subsequently served as West German Consul in Hongkong.

Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz. New head of Eastern European Department. Entered nazi diplomatic service in 1939, and served as expert on the staff of nazi embassy in Copenhagen during the war. There is some evidence that he helped Danish

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Jews during his wartime service. In the post-war period he served as West German Ambassador in Copenhagen.

Hasso von Etzdorf. New head of Western Department of Foreign Ministry. Joined nazi party in 1933, and held rank of colonel in Hitler's brown-shirted storm troops. Served throughout war as liaison officer of nazi Foreign Ministry with Wehrmacht Supreme Command. He entered the West German Foreign Ministry in 1950 and from 1956 served as West German Ambassador in Canada.

Hilger von Scherpenberg. New State Secretary in West German Foreign Ministry. Served in nazi diplomatic service, and is married to a daughter of Hjalmar Schacht, Hitler's "financial wizard".

Gebhardt von Walther. New head of Personnel Department of West German Foreign Ministry. Served in nazi diplomatic service throughout Hitler period. Re-entered diplomatic service after war and was West German Ambassador to Mexico from 1955.

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(GERMAN REPORT has in the past published fuller biographical material about most of the West German diplomats named above. Back copies giving this information are available for readers especially interested.)

West German Minister Was Goebbels "Front-Man"

New documents just discovered in the files of the nazi Ministry of Propaganda show that Ernst Lemmer, today West German Minister for All-German Affairs, served as a "non-nazi front man" for nazi Propaganda Minister Goebbels.

During the nazi period Herr Lemmer, who as a member of the liberal "Staatspartei" voted full dictatorial powers to Hitler in the Reichstag in March 1933, served as Berlin correspondent for various foreign newspapers, including the "Pester Lloyd" in Budapest, and the "Berner Bund" in Switzerland.

Since he had something of a reputation abroad as a non-nazi liberal, he was deliberately used by the nazi Propaganda Ministry to plant stories in the foreign press.

One case is clearly shown by the letters from the files of the Propaganda Ministry which have now been unearthed in Berlin. Here are the details of the case:

On November 2nd 1936, Herr Lemmer wrote to Herr Diewerge, second-in-command of the Propaganda Ministry, reporting that he had written an article for the "Berliner Bund" on the question of the persecution of Jews in Germany, and explaining "I believe that the formulation meets our wishes, but is so expressed that it will really be published in the liberal Swiss paper which I serve." Herr Lemmer concluded his letter with the words "Heil Hitler".

The article in question dealt with the reactions in Germany to the murder in Switzerland of nazi leader Wilhelm Gustloff by a Jewish student. It criticised papers outside Germany which had allegedly praised the murder, and commented: "The situation of the 400,000 Jews still living in Germany will certainly not be helped by such excesses on the part of irresponsible writers."

The article was published by the "Berner Bund" on November 5th, and on the same day Herr Diewerge reported to his chief Josef Goebbels: "I have arranged for the publication of this article in the 'Berner Bund'. This article is written from the point of view of a democrat worried about the fate of the Jews in Germany, and therefore will be quoted by a large number of foreign journals with which links have already been forged. The article ... makes it clear that such comments (anti-nazi articles, ed.) will certainly lead to a worsening of the position of the Jews in Germany ... I propose that this article should also be publicised in the German press in the form suggested herewith ..."

The "suggested form" consisted of an article stating in part: "This Jewish propaganda has even got on the nerves of the very patient Swiss. The liberal 'Berner Bund' states that ... it would be understandable if the Germans should take appropriate action in reply to such hate propaganda. The article points to the possible effects of such 'excesses on the part of irresponsible writers'."

The originals of the letters of Herr Lemmer and Herr Diewerge are available for inspection in Berlin. They show clearly that Herr Lemmer deliberately used his reputation as a "liberal" and "democrat", on the instructions of the nazi Propaganda Ministry, to plant in a Swiss paper the threat that further persecution of the Jews in Germany would result if foreign newspapers did not refrain from anti-nazi propaganda.

These documents were published in Berlin on February 4th 1958. At the time this issue went to press, Herr Lemmer, a member of Chancellor Adenauer's cabinet, had made no attempt to answer or comment on the disclosures.

SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY FIXES CONGRESS DATE, RESHUFFLES CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The Socialist Unity Party of Germany, leading party in the German Democratic Republic, will hold its Fifth Party Congress in July this year, it was announced on February 7th. The last party congress was held in 1954.

The meeting of the Central Committee which fixed the Congress date also voted unanimously for a re-shuffle, following a report on "the activity of an opportunist group which had attempted to change the political line of the party". Two leading members of the party were removed from the Central Committee and severely censured, and one other leading member was removed from the Politbureau but remained a member of the Central Committee.

Karl Schirdewan, 50, a member of the Politbureau, was removed from the Central Committee because of "fractional activity"; he was charged with having misunderstood the decisions of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of petty bourgeois megalomania, and of attacking the policy of Walter Ulbricht, First Secretary of the Central Committee.

Ernst Wollweber, who was Minister of State Security until a few months ago, was removed from the Central Committee because of offences against the Party Statute; he was charged with "criminal neglect of the struggle against enemy agencies", and of fractional activity in league with Karl Schirdewan.

Fred Oelssner, a leading theorist, was relieved of his function as member of the Politbureau because of "offences against discipline".

NAZI APOLOGIST FOR U. S. POST

The Remarkable Career of Herr Grewe

The West German Government has named Professor Wilhelm Grewe as new West German ambassador to the United States.

Both during and after the war Professor Grewe was an apologist for nazi policy and for the nazi war criminals. He first came into the public eye in 1938, five years after Hitler came to power, when he was appointed lecturer at the "High School for Politics" in Berlin. Only a nazi sympathiser could have received such an appointment at that time.

In the following years Grewe wrote frequently in a number of learned periodicals, providing the theoretical justification for many of Hitler's crimes. On this page we reproduce a passage from an article he wrote for the "Monthly for Foreign Policy" in September 1941, raising Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union as a "world-historic mission", and praising the "free corps from nearly every country in Europe", which were of course the quisling troops of the Waffen SS.

In other articles written during the nazi period, Grewe described the Kellogg Pact to outlaw war as "irreconcilable with the principle of the classical laws of war" ("Zeitschrift fuer Politik" 1942, page 202).

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stehen. Niemand wird behaupten wollen, daß die Entscheidung des 22. Juni nicht aus sehr realen Erwägungen erwachsen sei. Nach aller geschichtlichen Erfahrung pflegen große weltgeschichtliche Missionen, die nicht im Stadium der Utopie und der unverbindlichen Planung steckenbleiben, in solcher Weise ihren Anfang zu nehmen. Daß der große übernationale Auftrag, den es hier zu vollstrecken gilt, gleichwohl weithin verstanden worden ist beweisen die Expeditions- und Freikorps aus nahezu allen Ländern Europas, die an der Front im Osten stehen.

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. . . Nobody will wish to claim that the decision of July 22nd (Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, ed. GDR.) was not taken on very real grounds. The experience of history shows that all great world-historic missions, which do not bog down in the stage of Utopias and indefinite planning, tend to start in such a manner. The expeditionary force and the free corps from nearly every land in Europe which are at the eastern front, show that the great supranational task which has to be done here is also understood far and wide . . .

In another article in the "Zeitschrift fuer Politik" (1940, page 233), Grewe quoted with great approval a passage from Proudhon forecasting the complete destruction of Paris.

In October 1946, a year after the end of the war, Grewe was the main lecturer at a jurist's discussion in Stuttgart on the subject of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, and stated: "The victors are not entitled to sit in judgment on the defeated". ("Nuremberg as a Legal Problem", Ernst Klett Verlag 1947, page 13.) In the same lecture Grewe expressed his view that the main war criminals should not be punished "since the acts they committed were not punishable at the time of their commission".

There is no record of Professor Grewe ever renouncing his nazi ideology.

HITLER BACKERS CLAIM COMPENSATION

Leading nazis in West Germany will be paid large sums as "restitution" for their sufferings during the denazification period after the war, if a bill now before the West German Parliament should become law.

The preamble to this bill, which has the backing of the many ex-nazis and neo-nazis in parliament, states:

"In view of the fact that after the end of the Second World War many persons were persecuted and ill-treated because of their membership in the nazi party, or because of their political, governmental, military or economic position; in view of the fact that persons were illegally sentenced to death, imprisoned, fined and deprived of their property under laws which offend against the principles of German jurisprudence; in view of the fact that other persons, allegedly owing to their 'close connection with National Socialism' lost their position in professional life; . . . in view of the fact that morality and political sense demand the restoration of the internal rule of law, the Federal Parliament passes the following law."

The various paragraphs of the bill then provide for the cancellation of all allied and German laws, decrees and regulations which deal with denazification. Paragraph Eight of the law then lays down the scale of compensation which should be paid to all "persecuted nazis", and states: "This compensation should be paid under the terms of the existing Federal Law for Compensation to the Victims of National Socialist Persecution", the law under which Jews and other nazi victims have hitherto received restitution payments.

The Central Council of Jews in Germany has lodged a strong protest against this law, under which the nazi persecutors would be made eligible for compensation on the same terms as those whom they had persecuted.

1300 Foreign Students in E. Germany

A total of 1303 students from 44 different foreign countries are now studying at universities and technical high schools in the German Democratic Republic, according to official figures published in Berlin.

The largest single contingent of foreign students, numbering 349, comes from the Korean People's Democratic Republic (North Korea). Other big contingents come from China (208), the Soviet Union (108), and the Vietnamese Democratic Republic (84).

A very considerable number of students come from the independent countries of Africa and Asia: India (13), Syria (63), Egypt (16), Indonesia (32), Iraq (7), Iran (26), Nigeria (17), and Sudan (28).

SPORT IN EAST GERMANY

By J. Armour Milne

It is an astonishing thing that westwards less is known about sport in the German Democratic Republic than in any other country in the world today.

In athletics, for instance, I find a tendency in western Europe to lump the German Democratic Republic's top performances in with those by athletes of West Germany. And when great athletes like Hermann, Richtzenhain, Recknagel, Valentin and women athletes like Christa Stubnick and Gisela Koehler appear on the western scene, there are many people who are still surprised to find that they are from the eastern half of Germany.

I have just spent a hurried week in the German Democratic Republic — or rather in Berlin — and during that time I have been trying to bring myself up to date on what has been happening since I was last here on an extended visit in 1955. I am not going to suggest that anything took me completely by surprise, but as before, I could not be other than highly impressed by many things.

I saw a number of sporting events during my brief stay, including the athletics meeting which was the first event to be staged in the new Dynamo Sports Hall, and later on an international gymnastics match at the same venue. This hall, which was built in eighteen months, is going to be used for all kinds of indoor sports, and it has a seating capacity ranging from 1,800 for athletics up to 4,200 for boxing.

The wood running track has a circuit of 142 metres and down the centre of the arena it is possible to get in sprint or hurdles races over distances of up to 55 metres. There are also sunk jumping and polo vaulting pits.

This is not the only sports hall in the German Democratic Republic. There are fifty-nine of them of varying sizes. But this is obviously one of the best. And the interesting point is that there will be others. Meanwhile, so far as Dynamo Hall is concerned, this is the best of its kind I have seen anywhere in Europe.

Track and field athletics has for a long time been a traditional sport of the Germans, and Germany down the years has produced many great athletes, the greatest of them all being the pre-war champion Rudolf Harbig of Dresden, a 400 and 800 metres runner who stood out head and shoulders above them all in his day.

Another of the traditional sports of the Germans is cycling, both track and road, and it is not surprising to find the same keenness today. During my stay I saw two meetings on the board track specially erected for a month of racing in the Werner Seelenbinder Hall and here, as at the Dynamo Hall, I was tremendously impressed by both the keenness of the competitors and the enthusiasm of the spectators. During the month of cycling three racing sessions were held in each week and on both the occasions when I was present there were long queues of people waiting outside in the hope of obtaining returned tickets. And inside the hall not only the seating but also the inside of the arena was packed.

The racing was of a good standard, but most of the riders were immature, although holding out great promise. What should help cycling a lot in the present year is the fact that the world amateur motor-paced championship is to be decided in Leipzig in August, and the world cycle polo and acrobatic cycling championships in Karl Marx Stadt at the same time. The German Democratic Republic will also be represented in the world road and track championships in France in the same month.

In fact — and this was my biggest surprise — the German Democratic Republic has some 900 international events, home and away, listed in all sports for this year, among them the European athletics championships in Stockholm in August, when an all-German team will compete in the Olympics. I gather that in keeping with the plans of most countries only the best athletes — those with a chance of scoring — will be sent to Stockholm, but this still leaves the German Democratic Republic with wide scope for the nomination of representatives.

Here I have mentioned only two branches of sport, but the German Democratic Republic has a high standard in others, in swimming, handball and skiing, to give three widely separated examples.

But what is interesting is that, in all directions, the facilities are there and constantly developing. Supported by a growing number of expert instructors, coaches and trainers, it is obvious that the keenness of the youngsters, which I have seen in athletics and cycling, will inevitably produce better and better results.

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More Foreign Tours

East Germans with money to spare will have a choice of twelve countries in which to spend their holidays this summer. The East German Travel Bureau is arranging eight to twelve-day sightseeing tours in the Soviet Union, Austria and Czechoslovakia, as well as longer holidays in the mountains or in seacoast resorts in Bulgaria, Rumania, Albania, Yugoslavia, Finland and Sweden. A new venture will be the Egyptian tours, which include visits to the pyramids and Luxor.

SOCIALIST HOUSING IN EAST GERMANY

By Dr H. Hanke

It is not easy to provide homes for all in a country whose heritage from the nazi period and the war includes a disastrous amount of destruction in the cities.

The first step taken after World War Two in Democratic Germany had to be repairs to bombed buildings. 92,000 apartments were patched up and made inhabitable again. The next step was to fill in the gaps left by totally bombed-out houses. At this stage 340,000 entirely new apartments were put up, so that the most serious gap was filled.

The third step was to start work on planning and building up entirely bombed-out sections and new city areas, and here architects came into their own.

The most important thing at the moment is to build up the largest possible number of dwellings as economically as possible. Great efforts will be made in this direction during the next three years. 230,000 apartments are to be completed by 1960 and these efforts will continue until every family has a home of its own.

But today the problem is not just to get a roof over everybody's heads. We have passed that stage. In planning new dwellings architects must now direct their attention first and foremost to the needs of future tenants, and the transition must be made to large-scale industrial building methods. The socialist housing complex embodies these two principles.

Apart from such projects as the new towns of Stalinstadt, Hoyerswerda and Lauchhammer, building sites have hitherto been too scattered. There were innumerable smaller projects, and this made the use of modern building methods difficult. Modern methods in agriculture cannot be applied on small holdings, and in the same way the use of modern building machinery, cranes etc. can only be justified in big building projects. Only here can the advantages of typifying, standardisation and industrialisation be fully utilised. A fifty-ton crane, for instance, is no use in building a one-family house.

The socialist housing complex, on the other hand, is built to meet the needs of about 5,000 persons and represents a self-contained unit within the general city plan. The unit should not only be beautiful itself, but should also fit harmoniously into the city plan. The architect in charge must therefore strike a balance between beauty, economical and highly industrialised building methods, and comfort for the tenants.

The separate buildings within the socialist housing complex vary in height and size and can be attractively grouped. In this way the impression of beauty is transferred from the single to the larger object — much in the same way as furnishing with single pieces of matching furniture shifts attention from the single items in a room to the general effect. A certain amount of repetition is inevitable in planned large-scale building projects; variety is achieved by means of interesting combinations over a larger area — in a room, for instance, by artistic arrangement of furniture, carpets, lamps etc. On a broader scale, in the socialist housing complex, the effect is achieved not only by variety in shape, size and placing of buildings, but also by coloured facades, frescoes, lawns, trees and gardens, which give a spacious impression, without monotony and — most important — without gloomy inner courtyards.

No single building over-shadows another; big, broad windows let the sun reach the farthest corners of rooms and the air filters fresh and clean through trees and over green lawns.

The roads running through these garden settlements are up to sixty yards from the houses; gravel paths lead up to each house and only feeder roads run through the housing development, so that traffic noises are reduced to a minimum.

Population per square mile in these socialist type garden towns can be kept down to about one fifth of what is usual in big towns, mainly because conditions in Democratic Germany counter the tendency — prevailing under capitalism — to exploit every inch of space for profit. There is also a trend away from multi-storey buildings; generally speaking, blocks should not be more than four storeys high and should be built reasonably wide apart so as to allow plenty of garden space.

Schools, kindergartens, health centres, cinemas, self-service shops,

Huge cranes are used in building new blocks of flats

garages and clubs within each garden town open up possibilities for communal living which are simply not possible under ordinary city living conditions.

The standard apartment will have two living rooms and the necessary offices, with an average floor space of about seventy-two square yards; ceiling heights will average 7 feet 6 inches. Living rooms will not be more than 17 or 18 yards square and kitchens will be just big enough for their basic purpose.

Light, room-saving furniture of the combination type suitable for these small apartments will have to be produced in far greater quantities, and architects must pay more attention to the question of built-in cupboard and shelf space.

These garden towns, built with the help of socialist building methods, not only point the way to the solution of the housing problem; they are also the basis for new town planning. Generations of progressive architects and town planners have dreamt of such a development for the whole of Germany.

The West German journal "Der Volkswirt", Number 47/1957, however, comments as follows on West German conditions:

"The Academy for Town and Country Planning has repeatedly expressed its fear that control over space in cities and in the country is slipping out of human control, just as it did in the earlier period of expansion, so that a foundation is being laid for new slums in West Germany. The chaotic traffic conditions which exist in some big cities today are one obvious result of recent mistakes..."

There is one way to avoid these difficulties: the right to use the land must be in the hands of the people. The social order which bases its activity on the profit motive must be dissolved.

We have done this; and our socialist housing complexes are one of the results.

(Abridged from "Wochenpost", January 18th 1958)

"DEMOCRATIC GERMANY CALLING"

On the Air from East Berlin

By Mary Wolfard

If, in Broadcasting House here in East Berlin you should hear a short and cheerful "Hey!" rather than the more sedate "Guten Morgen", you can be quite sure that you are in the Foreign Department.

"Hey" is Swedish for "Hallo" and its delightful simplicity in this babel of tongues is responsible for its general adoption. It's friendly too, so that if, like the American Ambassador to Ceylon, you are not very good at pronouncing names, this greeting at least shows your good intentions.

The Foreign Department is a rapidly expanding section of the German Democratic State Radio and whereas not so long ago a few German speaking Swedes and Swedish speaking Germans were just about all there was to it, today regular week-day short-wave transmissions in Swedish, Danish, French, Arabic, Persian and of course English go out.

Unlike foreign language transmissions from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, Radio Berlin does not present international news coverage. It is felt that in view of the role played in recent history by imperial and nazi Germany, in view of current trends in West Germany, and in view of the new path followed by the German Democratic Republic, Radio Berlin can make its best contribution to international understanding by broadcasting exclusively about Germany — east and west. It seeks to present the news which is either omitted, distorted or insufficiently explained by most western newspapers.

Each language programme is run entirely independently of every other, because it is appreciated that the method of presentation must vary from country to country. There are naturally things that each of the foreign language services will cover. Important national events, vital economic developments, crucial news about West Germany and so on, but the treatment is left entirely to the various language departments.

As the English service is likely to be of most interest to readers of GERMAN REPORT, perhaps you would like to go for a conducted tour of the English department. We could, so to speak, go to work there for a day.

Work starts at 8.30 in the morning for most of the staff. It is quite usual in Central Europe for offices to open at this early hour and although it is a bit tough on the innocent foreigner arriving to work in these parts, he reluctantly gets used to it. So we turn up at this English language oasis in Broadcasting House and try a door bearing a picture of a very friendly red British lion with soft green eyes. The injunction "Beware of Lions" replaces the name-plate. Vicky cartoons on the walls and English books on the bookshelves, apart from a welcome in English from the Anglo-German staff tells us that we are in the right place.

Work begins -- that is, after the inevitable "Did you see so and so on television last night?" The first couple of hours are spent going through the domestic and foreign press and the news agency reports which are as much tools of the trade as typewriter and microphone. Various radio news bulletins are also picked up. It is a relatively quiet session apart from the outcries of scorn, admiration or indignation at the different reports.

At 10.30 the daily conference of the heads of all the foreign language departments takes place under the chairmanship of the head of the whole foreign service. Here the handling of any news items of outstanding importance will be discussed and various ideas tossed back and forth. While the conference is an expression of the collective leadership or team work of the foreign service, it is also intended to spark off a few ideas.

The daily conference is usually over by 11 o'clock — which I am sure you will agree is very reasonable in this land of conferences. But even while it is still going on the script writers in the different departments are at work in various ways. One will be out with a portable tape recorder interviewing some celebrity for your information. The sports specialist may be down at the ice rink studying form and the musical expert will doubtless be closeted away in some listening room going through the latest records for the Record Magazine. Others will be

dictating scripts, based on material already gathered, to the German stenographers and hoping that "attacks on the government" won't come out as "a tax on the government", and that the inconsistencies of English spelling won't lead to too many deformities like "newtricious" and the "mare of Hamburg".

During all this, the phones keep pretty busy and apart from routine calls, there is plenty of this sort of thing: "Sprechen Sie Englisch? Oh good! This is Light Music. How would you translate 'Smoke Gets In Your Eyes' into German? Or "Drama Department here. We are translating an English play, so could you please give me the German equivalent of 'the bee's knees'?"

Then Social Affairs has got hold of an American union paper and wants to know what a yellow dog contract is. And Economics wants to know if the "Economist" really said ... Unfortunately not. And the time passes much too quickly.

After lunch the producer arrives and goes through the programme planned for the day, which is still of course only partly ready. After a few pained protests that this, that and the other are impossible, he retires to the effects and music departments to hunt up the necessary tape recordings which will help to tie the individual items into a balanced whole.

The chief goes through the scripts, rejecting, selecting and amending and the English is brushed up where necessary; excessive national pride is watered down and such phrases as "the best in the world" are modified to the more accurate "good". The political commentary — when called for — is written and finally, the news editors get to work on the daily news bulletin. Round about 5.30 all is ready for the announcers, who now turn up. They go through the scripts which are not being read by the commentators themselves and then, later in the evening, "This is Berlin, Democratic Germany speaking to you" goes on the air.

Among the regular features in the English programme, the most popular are the Wednesday letter, "Dear Elizabeth", written by her friend Evelyn in East Berlin about the life of her family here, and "Mailbag" each Friday when listeners' letters are answered and their musical requests played. Other regular features are the weekly talk by John Peet, editor of GERMAN REPORT, the Monday sports commentary and the Saturday night musical programmes. Then there is the new feature called "Our Scrapbook", which goes out roughly twice a week and which is made up of short items of political interest about east and west Germany.

It was interesting to spend a day with these people putting out the programme. It was fun, too, and as the quips fly back and forth you can really feel the underlying comradeship. This does not mean that blunt or even sharp criticism is not the order of the day; (I wonder, incidentally, how many departmental heads in western broadcasting stations would take it as all in the day's work when some of his assistants told him frankly that his script was poor and needed re-writing?) But while people say what they think about each other's work, they do so without animosity and solely with the aim of putting together the best possible programme.

But let us not be romantic about it and pretend that everybody has sprouted wings over-night. I was told, for instance, that there is one member of the staff who is a good lad, but he does not take kindly to "suggestions" and that the awaited explosion takes place with clockwork regularity, to the amusement of all — except the suggestee.

The foreign staff are a real international crowd and it is nothing to hear the young blond German stenographer chattering away in Arabic or the Middle Easterners doing their best with the complexities of German grammar. International solidarity is the watchword and it was good to see the comradeship between the Frenchman who suffered hell in a German concentration camp and the Algerian who, after being shot about in the International Brigade in Spain, was tortured by the French for his part in the Algerian liberation struggle.

Working here, they feel, as do all of them up in the Foreign Service at Broadcasting House, East Berlin, that they are fighting for peace and against German imperialism by telling the truth about the stirring things happening here in the German Democratic Republic and the nazi renaissance over in West Berlin and in the West German Republic.

TIMES & WAVELENGTHS OF EAST GERMAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRANSMISSIONS

If you want to listen to broadcasts from the radio of the German Democratic Republic, tune in on the following wavelengths: 30.83 metres, 9730 kcs
41.96 metres, 7150 kcs
49.06 metres, 6115 kcs

The different language transmissions may be heard at the following times (in GMT) from Monday to Saturday inclusive:

English: 19.05 and 21.30 hours.
French: 19.30, 21.00 and 22.30 hours.
Swedish: 18.80, 20.30 and 22.00 hours.
Danish: 18.00 and 20.00 hours.
Arabic: 16.30 hours.
Persian: 16.00 hours.

Police Raids, Arrests in W. Germany

West German police raided offices and homes all over West Germany on February 4th, after Minister of the Interior Gerhard Schroeder, a former nazi storm trooper, had proclaimed a ban against a number of progressive organisations. The organisations, which are accused of being camouflaged substitutes for the prohibited West German Communist Party, include the "West German Refugee Congress", the "Association for the Protection of Democratic Rights", and the "Working Group of Democratic Lawyers".

On the same date police arrested in Dusseldorf Walter Fisch, leading West German Communist who spent many years in nazi concentration camps.

In further mass police raids on February 7th, a total of 59 persons were arrested in Bavaria, charged with working illegally for the banned Communist Party.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

This is anniversary time in Germany, since it is just a quarter of a century since Hitler came to power in 1933. Let me just recall the relevant dates. On January 30th, Hitler became chancellor; on February 27th, Goering set fire to the Reichstag in Berlin, blamed the fire on the Communists, and launched the brown terror; on March 5th the last semi-free elections were held, giving 17 million votes for Hitler, 7 million votes for the Social Democrats, nearly 5 million votes for the already outlawed Communists, and over 5 million votes for various liberal parties; on March 23rd Hitler finally assumed full sway with the passage through parliament of the "Enabling Law" giving him dictaforical powers.

Reichstag Fire

Everybody knows what happened after that: the Social Democratic Party, the trade unions, and all the non-nazi parties were destroyed one after another: the road was clear for concentration camps, gas chambers, and World War Two.

But let us go back to the Reichstag Fire on February 27th 1933, just 25 years ago. Many readers will remember the world wide campaign for the release of the men accused of setting fire to the Reichstag: Bulgarian Communist leader Georgi Dimitrov, his two compatriots Blagoi Popov and Vassili Tanev, German Communist Ernst Torgler, and a down-and-out Dutchman, Marius van der Lubbe.

Thanks to Dimitrov's fighting self-defence in the course of the trial, and the world-wide protest campaign, all the accused except van der Lubbe were acquitted for lack of evidence.

Back in Berlin

As the 25th anniversary of the Reichstag Fire came round, I began to wonder what had happened to the three Bulgarians accused who had been granted asylum in the Soviet Union early in the year 1934: and I discovered that one of the accused is not only alive and well, but is today working as a diplomat in Berlin, where he was arrested 25 years ago on a framed-up charge as an arsonist.

He is Blagoi Popov, who today holsd the post of Legation Counsellor in the Bulgarian Embassy in East Berlin, accredited to the Government of the German Democratic Republic.

Photos of the Reichstag Fire Trial show Mr. Popov as a black-haired thin-faced young man, showing clear evidence of his deprivations in a nazi jail during the long months awaiting the trial. Today he is a vigorous white-haired man showing little sign of his long confinement in nazi and other prisons.

He recalled the enormous moral encouragement which it had been to him and his compatriots in their nazi jail in 1933 when they heard that they were not alone, and when news was smuggled in to them that big demonstrations were being held in London, in New York, and all over the world demanding their release. "I particularly remember that a woman member of the Britsh House of Commons sent us flowers in prison" he said. "I can't recall her name, but I have always wanted to thank her."

Mr. Popov told me that his compatriot Tanev had been killed in 1941 fighting in Bulgaria against the German and Bulgarian fascists. Georgi Dimitrov, of course, became Prime Minister of the Bulgarian People's Republic, and died in 1949 at the age of 67.

Carnival Issue

It is an old tradition in Germany for newspapers to issue special spoof carnival issues during the period preceding Lent, with contents rather similar to those of the "Rag Magazines" sometimes got out by the students of British universities.

One of the wittiest of these carnival issues in West Germany is that produced by the serious liberal newspaper "Sueddeutsche Zeitung"; it is a beautifully made straight-faced parody of itself. Most of the jokes are untranslatable, I am afraid, since they consist of puns or recondite allusions which would demand columns of explanation for foreign readers.

But there are two short news items which I should like to reproduce, since they throw a light on an aspect of life in West Germany which is worrying the liberal journalists who work for a newspaper like the "Sueddeutsche Zeitung". Here they are:

"The Association of Former Judges and Prosecutors of the People's Courts (nazi special courts, ed. GDR) has struck a special medal in memory of Roland Freisler (notorious nazi terror judge, ed.) which will be awarded in gold, silver and bronze to persons at home and abroad who have won special merit in helping renazification. The Association has taken the opportunity of protesting to the Federal Ministry of Justice against the fact that four former judges in the People's Courts are still working in subordinate posts, such as directors of county courts etc."

True Parody

The second short item runs as follows:

"The district court at Binsen, Lower Saxony, sentenced concentration camp commander Siegfried Sadinsky to a term of 17 days in prison and a fine of 35 marks. The judge gave the accused a serious warning that if he repeated his offence his fine might be doubled."

Both these news items are true parody: that is to say a very slight exaggeration of the truth. The former judges of Hitler's People's Courts have not yet struck a special medal for services to renazification, but they might almost do so: and in fact the vast majority of them are back at work again in responsible posts in the West German legal set-up. And former concentration camp commanders are being given fatuously short sentences, if they are brought to justice at all.

Bitter Reality

And to return from the world of bitter parody to bitter reality, I have just space to mention the case of Herr Keschmann, state prosecutor in the West German city of Freiburg, who publicly slandered his Jewish college Robert Grumbach by referring to him as a "Jewish swine", a term which formed a normal part of the nazi racialist vocabulary. The Provincial Ministry of Justice has refused to suspend Herr Keschmann from his post, and has made every effort to prevent Robert Grumbach from taking legal proceedings against him.

We shall keep our eye upon this case, and report to readers on any future developments.

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